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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 TOKYO 002659

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UNSC](#) [ASEAN](#) [KS](#) [CH](#) [JA](#)
SUBJECT: U.S.-JAPAN POLICY PLANNING BILATERAL

REF: A. TOKYO 2609
[1](#)B. TOKYO 2610
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Classified By: Charge d'Affaires, a.i. Joe Donovan. Reason: 1.4 (B) AND (D)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. Japan's bid for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council and Japan's leadership role in Asia were the main topics of a May 11 conversation between U.S. and Japanese policy planners. DVFM Kohno told S/P Director Stephen D. Krasner that he had expected the U.S. to make a counterproposal to Japan's UN Security Council reform proposal, and remarked that time was growing short before the UN adjourned for the summer and the upcoming summit. Japan aspires to be a "thought leader" in Asia, Kohno state, building on its own experiences to support a region of free markets and democratic societies. Kohno described the East Asia Summit a venue in which to engage China as a stakeholder in the international system. End Summary.

UN Security Council Reform

[1](#)2. (C) Deputy Vice Minister for Foreign Policy Masaharu Kohno made a strong call for U.S.-Japan bilateral coordination and for more tangible and explicit U.S. support for Japan's bid for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council during a May 11 U.S.-Japan policy planning bilateral meeting. Little progress had been made despite a lot of bilateral discussion, Kohno said. Prime Minister Koizumi, he said, had recently called this one of Japan's highest priority issues. Kohno wanted to "impress on the U.S." how important this issue is, and said that his specific message for the U.S. government is that if Japan had a permanent seat on the Security Council, it would constructively contribute to the future of the UN.

[1](#)3. (C) Kohno, speaking "rather frankly," remarked that in his 30 years experience working with the United States, Japan has collaborated well on U.S. initiatives. Now the tables are turned, and he had the "expectation" that in response to Japan's proposal on Security Council expansion, the U.S. would make a constructive, clear-cut counterproposal -- but none has been forthcoming. Since Prime Minister Koizumi will attend a summit in the U.S. and is nearing the end of his term as prime minister, and because the UN session will adjourn for summer, Japan has a pressing need to receive the

U.S. response, Kohno said. Japan would not give up its bid for a permanent seat in the Security Council, Kohno stressed, and this effort would be a "never-ending process" of proposals until Japan is successful.

14. (C) If Japan were to bid for a permanent seat, he was "dead confident" that Japan would receive the required 2/3 majority of votes, Kohno explained. To set the stage for this, more tangible U.S. support for Japan's bid is required because a number of countries have asked if the U.S. truly supports Japan's bid. Japan's "hidden agenda" on this is to start the process jointly with the United States, because this action will have its own significance in the U.S.-Japan bilateral relationship and in the UNSC reform process, Kohno confided.

15. (C) When asked how he expected China and South Korea to react to the U.S. acting jointly with Japan on Japan's UN Security Council bid, Kohno expressed optimism that while China is currently engaging in a negative campaign, in the end China would not oppose the other members of the Security Council, particularly the United States. On the other hand, he thought it would be difficult for South Korea to change its position due to the current ROK domestic political climate. DCM Donovan responded to Kohno's assessment by pointing out that China's actions on this issue have been opportunistic: it is forward-leaning when discussing Security Council expansion with other countries interested in obtaining their own permanent membership in the UNSC because China believes the chances of expansion are slim. In reality, China would be loath to expand the Security Council since this could be seen as diminishing China's influence. Therefore, Japan should not assume that China would eventually not block Japan's bid if confronted with a strong majority,

16. (C) Despite Japan's latest proposal of a two-permanent

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seat expansion, Kohno said he still believed the six-seat proposal was ideal. Two seats are definitely the lowest Japan could go and still carry the required vote, he said. When asked his opinion on which country should be the other candidate, Kohno responded that perhaps there should be one developed country (Japan) and one developing country (undetermined). Kohno declined to comment when Krasner asked him to think through the scenarios that would lead to India, Brazil, or South Africa being elected as part of the pair with Japan.

17. (C) If there were a clear strategy on UN Security Council reform that would work, the U.S. would be doing it already, Krasner opined. Kohno responded by making a strong case for starting the process of UN Security Council reform, and resolving the expansion issue once the process was set in motion. When Japan and the U.S. see how people react, and what problems arise, they could come up with a plan to deal with them, he suggested. If that approach did not work, Japan could always stop and re-think the process. Krasner counter-suggested that the Japanese government might want to develop a strategy that included elaborating on several possible scenarios, including the name of the other candidate country and the expected deals required to ensure getting the needed number of votes, rather than feeling it out as they went along.

History Issues and Japan's Leadership in Asia

18. (C) Kohno shared his views on Japan's leadership role in Asia. He said that with the 1977 Fukuda Doctrine, Japan focused on nurturing relationships with its Asian neighbors. ASEAN expanded following the end of the Cold War. In the 1990s, Japan, South Korea, and China began their own three-party dialogue, and joined the ASEAN 3 meetings. In the ensuing years, issues such as economic interdependence,

intra-regional trade, and cross-border/global issues have been pulling the region together. The East Asia Summit (EAS) is an outgrowth of this, Kohno explained, and shows that the regional concept of Southeast Asia has been replaced with a region called East Asia. Including India, Australia, and New Zealand in the East Asia Summit was Japan's idea, in order to better reflect the wide-ranging East Asian community. The East Asia Summit is an additional organization that can engage China to make it more of a stakeholder in the regional system, Kohno stated.

¶9. (C) Kohno concluded that Japan's "friends first" policy has served Japan well, and noted that Foreign Minister Aso has described Japan as the "thought leader" of the region. Nobukatsu Kanehara, Political Minister of Japan's Embassy in Washington, expanded on Kohno's comments by adding that Japan has had to earn back the leadership role it lost in 1945. Since Japan has already experienced urbanization and democratization, Japan can understand what its Asian neighbors are experiencing, help them, and earn back its reputation and leadership role, Kaneharu said.

¶10. (C) S/P Member Evan Feigenbaum replied by noting three "disconnects" in the U.S. perception of pan-Asian "community"-building. First, Southeast Asia has been the locus of regional multilateralism but the locus of power to deal with real problems lies with Northeast Asian countries. Second, ASEAN itself is very diverse. It includes democracies and non-democracies, economies that have embraced globalization, like Singapore, and economies that have not, like Burma, and thus the notion of "community" is a bit vague. Third, pan-Asian groups like EAS lack a functional agenda. The U.S. generally favors a functional approach that builds a track-record of success in jointly solving problems.

¶11. (C) Japan is viewed in Asia as a responsible leader, Kohno asserted, and vice its participation in pan-Asian groups as part of this. Krasner responded that if you want to play the ambitious role of "thought leader," you have to consider the views of your neighbors and address them. Krasner said he wanted to "toss out" some ideas. Krasner asked whether Japan was trying to understand why its neighbors were raising questions related to history, textbooks and Yasukuni Shrine. Krasner stated that he had no opinion about Japanese behavior, but noted that the view of Japan's neighbors was making it difficult for Japan to be a regional leader.

¶12. (C) Koji Tomita, Minister of Japan's Embassy in Seoul, responded that this requires a willingness on the part of China and South Korea to accept Japan as it is. Mentioning history issues was merely focusing on the negatives. Japan has also overhauled its political system and created an affluent, democratic society. This is a role model for

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neighboring countries, Tomita suggested. Kanehara added that a 1980s law ensures textbooks take neighboring countries' concerns into account, and that it is not government policy to visit Yasukuni Shrine, but rather a personal decision on the part of the prime minister that happened to cause diplomatic disputes.

¶13. (C) DCM Donovan remarked that "good friends" have to have these difficult conversations sometimes, and that the U.S.-Japan bilateral relationship could also be a positive model for Asia since the United States has crafted a forward-looking relationship that does not ignore history but does it dwell on it, either. Krasner seconded this view, and said that to have Japan as "a leader, the leader" of Asia would be a very attractive outcome for the United States.

Participants

¶14. (U) Participants in the meeting included:

United States

Stephen D. Krasner, Director, Policy Planning Staff
Joe Donovan, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy Tokyo
James Zumwalt, Economic Minister-Counselor, Embassy Tokyo
Evan Feigenbaum, S/P Member
David Wolff, Political Officer, Embassy Tokyo
Geneve Menscher, Political Officer, Embassy Tokyo (notetaker)

Japan

Masaharu Kohno, Deputy Vice Minister for Foreign Policy
Nobukatsu Kanehara, Minister, Japan Embassy in Washington
Koji Tomita, Minister, Japan Embassy in Seoul
Mr. Osamu Izawa, Principal Senior Foreign Policy Coordinator
Mr. Shinya Fujita, Deputy Director, Policy Planning Division
Wakako Imataka, Official, Policy Planning Division

15. (U) S/P Director Krasner cleared this message.

DONOVAN